

## Frequently Asked Questions & Suggested Readings/Videos – Start Here – Philly Antifa

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##### 1) What is Antifa?

Antifa, short for Anti-Fascist, is a term to used describe both individuals opposed to fascism and a loose movement of organizations who engage in direct conflict with fascist and Neo-Nazi organizations. While many types of organizations consider their goal to be to fight racism and fascism, “Antifa” as a moniker usually implies the group or person is militant in their analysis and willing to engage in or support those that engage in direct confrontation and disruptive tactics against Neo-Nazis, Klansmen, and other types of bigots.

Antifa Philadelphia are an Anti-Fascist organization operating in Philly and the surrounding area. We were founded in 2012 and are members of the TORCH Antifa Network and support their points of unity:

1. We disrupt fascist and far right organizing and activity.
2. We don't rely on the cops or courts to do our work for us. This doesn't mean we never go to court, but the cops uphold white supremacy and the status quo. They attack us and everyone who resists oppression. We must rely on ourselves to protect ourselves and stop the fascists.
3. We oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation. We intend to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement of oppressed people centered on the working class against racism, sexism, nativism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against the disabled, the oldest, the youngest, and the most oppressed people. We support abortion rights and reproductive freedom. We want a classless, free society. We intend to win!
4. We hold ourselves accountable personally and collectively to live up to our ideals and values.
5. We not only support each other within the network, but we also support people outside the network who we believe have similar aims or principles. An attack on one is an attack on all

More reading on the history of Anti-Fascism/militant Anti-Fascism:

<https://itsgoingdown.org/antifa-worldwide-brief-history-international-antifascism/>

Physical Resistance by Dave Hamm

<http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/39128-the-changing-face-of-anti-fascism>

<http://www.kersplebedeb.com/mystuff/books/fascism.html>

## 2) I have heard that Antifa are violent, is this true?

Anyone who is resisting Neo-Nazi, KKK or other Fascist groups will inevitably be forced to at least defend themselves from violence. Liberal and Pacifist Anti-Racists are attacked for their completely legal and non-violent work regularly. Antifa know that when you oppose fascism and Racism, or if you are a member of a population being targeted by fascists, sometimes the best defense is a good offense. Furthermore, since militant Antifa have hostile relationships with the state and law enforcement, we have only each other to depend on when fascists are on the move.

Many Anti-Fascists do not engage in direct confrontation with fascists for a variety of reasons or concerns. But all Antifa know that confrontation is an important element in defeating fascism. An important part of fascist ideology is centered around “controlling the streets,” meaning establishing a hegemony over the political sphere and subcultures, unfettered access to young people for recruits, and a stage to perform their elaborate street theater propaganda rallies. When Anti-Fascists are successful, it means the Nazis and fascists in their town are completely neutralized on the streets, forcing them to act in a totally clandestine way.

Antifa generally adhere to a “no platform” policy for racists and fascists, meaning we would oppose their organizations attempts to speak in public, hold political demonstrations, or recruit openly. History has shown time and time again what happens when demagogues are allowed to lie and inflame people’s bigotries in short-sighted pursuit of power. Only the most privileged or naive can still assume a “wait and see” attitude towards Nazis and Fascists.

*“If fascism could be defeated in debate, I assure you that it would never have happened, neither in Germany, nor in Italy, nor anywhere else. Those who recognized its threat at the time and tried to stop it were, I assume, also called “a mob”. Regrettably too many “fair-minded” people didn’t either try, or want to stop it, and, as I witnessed myself during the war, accommodated themselves when it took over ... People who witnessed*

*fascism at its height are dying out, but the ideology is still here, and its apologists are working hard at a comeback. Past experience should teach us that fascism must be stopped before it takes hold again of too many minds, and becomes useful once again to some powerful interests."*

– Franz Frison, Holocaust survivor, 12th December, 1988

More reading on violence and no platform policy:

The Failure of Nonviolence by Peter Gelderoos

<https://libcom.org/blog/why-no-platform-still-relevant-trouble-liberal-anti-fascism-05012013>

### 3) How is your group organized?

Some of our organizing models and structure is private, but Antifa Philadelphia is an Anti-Authoritarian group. This means we do not have any hierarchies, official leadership, positions of power or subordinates. We are also explicitly Anti-Capitalist. Therefore our membership is overwhelmingly Anarchist. Non-anarchists have and can be members, supporters or allies, but if you are not prepared to operate in a horizontal manner, then this is not the group for you.

### 4) How do I join?

We are always looking for dedicated and serious Anti-Fascists to get involved. However, we do not "recruit" in the traditional sense that many other political organizations do. Our approach has always been "quality over quantity" in new membership and our probate process can be long (or short) depending on the circumstances. We also have security concerns that those other organizations to not, which necessitates a different approach.

Reading this FAQ is a good first step. Familiarize yourself with some or all of the materials listed here. Next would be to contact us and let us know you are interested. We will then set up a face to face meeting with a few of our members just to introduce ourselves and as a security precaution. Assuming that goes well, you will probably be invited to our next open meeting, which take place usually around once a month.

Once you've gone to a few meetings and public events and are sure you're interested in membership, you would let the group know and we would begin our probating process, which we would describe at that time.

### 5) I don't really want to/can't commit to join a group right now. Does that mean we can't work together?

Not at all. We have plenty of friends around town who aren't into official organizations or just can't commit to the responsibilities of membership who come to open meetings, work with us on projects and roll with us in the streets.

#### **6) Do you have an announce list so I can know about events and demonstrations?**

Yes we do. Email us at [phillyantifascists@gmail.com](mailto:phillyantifascists@gmail.com) and let us know if you want to be added to our public announce list.

#### **7) What is "Anti-Antifa?" What is Rock Against Communism?**

Anti-Antifa is exactly what it sounds like: fascists. It is a label made up by Nazis in order to try and mobilize the fence-walking part of youth and music subcultures who have had run-ins with Antifa over their complicity in Nazi and fascist movements recruiting and operating in those subcultures. Basically if someone reps Anti-Antifa they are at best a right wing nationalist, and at worst a full on Nazi.

Rock Against Communism is another code word employed by the Racist Right. RAC was started by the National Front in England as a direct response to Rock Against Racism, an Anti-Nazi League Campaign. The original RAC bands were Neo-Nazi punk bands, though these days the term is claimed by a slightly broader political span, ranging from Far Right Nationalist Racist Sexist Xenophobes without swastikas to Far Right Nationalist Racist Sexist Xenophobes with Swastikas.

RAC, Anti-Antifa and other code words are utilized by Fascists who want to make space for their politics in sub-cultural spaces by jettisoning unfavorable associations and symbols.

More reading on Anti-Antifa and Rock Against Communism:

#### **8) What are some lower-risk things I can do to help?**

You can help us gather intel by sending us tips, [donate to our warchest](#), promote our public events and demonstrations, and defend Antifa when they come under attack from the left and liberals in the media and online.

#### **9) What are some other suggested readings or videos I can check out to learn more?**

Here are some good docs about Antifa:

[Fighting Talk](#) (short doc about AFA in England)

[Chasseur De Skins](#) (doc about Anti-Racist French Skinheads)

[161>88](#) (doc about Anti-Fascism in Czech Republic)

[Invisible Revolution](#) (doc about Anti-Racist Action in the U.S. in the early 2000s)

[Anti-Fascist Attitude](#) (doc about Antifa in Russia)

[Ivan, In Memory of Our Friend](#) (doc about murdered Russian Antifa)

Here are some good readings to check out:

["Beating the Fascists"](#) by Sean Birchall

["Physical Resistance"](#) by Dave Hann

["Militant Anti-Fascism"](#) by M. Testa